2:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1936) 1949
FL11 Luo FL11

while relations of a personal kind and kinship links between individuals run across their common frontiers and are compelled to do so by the exogamous rules obtaining in Luo society.

Several of the clans and maximal lineages possess sacred spears and other objects believed to have belonged to their founders. The best known sacred spear (*tong ma lisua*, spear of sacrifice) is the *tong* Alego, the spear of Alego, the founder of the JoAlego clan. In Ugenya the JokaGer clan have several such spears and there are others in possession of the lineages descended from Cuanya to the south of the gulf. Where there are important stranger lineages in a tribe they may also have their sacred objects, e.g. in Alego the KaLuo and the JokOgelo have sacred spears and the JoAgoro have a sacred stone and a sacred pot handed down from their founders. These objects are symbols of the unity of a clan or lineage and, by extension, of the tribe or tribal segment in which it is dominant, and they were used ritually in time of war or of common calamity, such as drought and invasion by locusts. They seem generally, if not always to be held by the senior line (*dho ot ma duong*) of a lineage or clan and are kept either in a granary or in hiding in the bush. The senior line is often called on by junior collateral lines to perform important sacrifices for them and the senior lineage ought to provide the sacrificial beast at ceremonies common to all the lineages. I was told also that while each lineage had its *won gweng*, 'father of the land' the *won gweng* of the senior lineage had chief prestige among them.

Some clans and lineages have certain ritual prohibitions (*kwer*), mostly on certain foods, particularly kidneys and liver. The Luo do not give the impression of attaching much importance to them and if a man and a woman observe the same taboo it is not in itself a bar to marriage. Reference must also be made to clan and lineage honorific, or praise, names. The *nying paak* is generally derived from the name of a paternal ancestor whose name is a lineage cognomen, e.g. Okwiri (see the chart of the JoOwila clan) can be called, according to the circumstances, *wud* (son of) KoOkelo, *wud* KaJeje, and *wud* Owila. These names are much used at communal gatherings, expecially at large beer parties.

A feature of clanship which would seem to be of some importance is the annual inter-lineage wrestling. Unfortunately, I only became aware of these shortly before I left Luoland and had afterwards no further opportunity to enquire further into the custom, or to discover whether it is practised all over Luoland or only in some tribal areas, such as U-yoma where the closely related collateral lineages wrestle for practice prior to the wrestling matches between the big lineages. Thus the Ko-Okwiri are matched against the KoObong, then these two lineages together against the KaAtuenga and KaAbudha, and so on. The lineages send a messenger to challenge the other party and when they meet an elder presides over the joint bouts and the exhibition matches between famous wrestlers on each side. The matches are said to occasion much excitement among the spectators.

The sketch given above of the Luo clan is only an outline delineating feature of it. A little detail is filled in here and there in the following

5: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1903 FL11 Luo FL11
Bantu Kavirondo FL4
Nandi FL13

B 778 769

excitement would then ensue and stupendous efforts would be made to recover the cow, which rarely failed to be returned to the owner before nightfall in order to redeem the sacred stone.

L 769 778 782

The Ja-Luo do not erect altars to the spirits of their ancestors like the Bantu Kavirondo, but for all that they believe in the influence of the spirits of the departed. If a man is stricken by illness, he will make a feast at the door of his hut, and he will take small pieces of meat and throw one to each of the four quarters of the compass; he will then fill his mouth with native beer and squirt a mouthful out on the ground in different directions and finally in a similar way toss out spoonfuls of *mtama* porridge in various directions as propitiatory offerings, at the same time imploring the spirits to take the food and not to worry him.

Charms.

B 789

Charms are legion among all the Kavirondo, and like other native races (and European, too, for the matter of that), they make no attempt to explain why such and such a charm should produce a certain effect.

The Awa-Tsoso tie a feather from a white chicken on the end of a stick as a charm to keep off hail; the sticks, which are about four feet long, are planted at intervals in the fields of beans and sem-sem; some seem to pin their faith to a wisp of grass which is tied to the stick and placed among the growing crops in the same way. This was only noticed among the Eastern Tsoso people of the Koweri clan, but is probably wide spread.

B [824]

The Tiriki people suspend a ball of clay by a string which is fastened to a stick, and plant one of these in a field of sweet potatoes or ground nuts to prevent thieving; the ball of clay has one of the yellow fruit of the common wild *Solanum* stuck into it.

N 789 824 728

The use of this combination of the fruit of the Solanum and clay, as a charm for good, seems to be rather widespread, for at the close of the Nandi campaign of 1900 when the chiefs were making overtures for peace, they brought to the Government station a native stool on which was a conical mass of moist red clay which rather reminded one of a child's mud pie; this was studded all over with the yellow Solanum fruit, and was said to be great peace medicine.

B 751

In some parts of Bantu Kavirondo, an old earthenware cooking pot will often be seen fixed as a finial on the point of one of the natives conical huts. This is a charm to prevent the children becoming cross eyed, for it is said children, when quite babies, are often stricken with a disease of the eyes which leaves a chronic squint; the charm does not render them immune to the disease, but averts the after effects; this belief occurs among many tribes in Bantu Africa, and the same charm is used.

B 824 778

Among charms we may perhaps mention that curious tree the *Ekirikiti* or, as it is called in Kavirondo, the *Murembe* tree (*Erythrina tomentosa*) which is remarkable both for its brilliant red flowers, and from the fact that it bears its leaves and flowers at different seasons.

795 Lastly, my followers must immediately slaughter all their cattle, sheep, and goats. When this is done, I will provide them with as many more as they want from the Lake." Having said this, the snake disappeared into the lake.

Onyango soon set about spreading his gospel and, as was natural with so attractive a programme, it was not long before he had a considerable following. They were divided into what may be described as two Degrees. The First Degree consisted of those personally "called" [786] in very much the same way as Onyango had been " called." They were all men, mostly older men and the heads of Bomas. The "call" consisted in their throwing some kind of fit, possibly an ecstacy of religious exaltation, during which words poured from them in an un- [791] intelligible torrent. They became the priests and were in tremendous demand as witch-doctors since they soon were invested with, or themselves assumed supernatural powers.

761 For example, they were reputed to be able to recall to life a dying person or one who had just died. The procedure here began with the 795 priest's acceptance of a goat as his fee. The patient, or corpse was stretched on the ground and lightly covered with freshly cut grass, some of which was twisted into a thick rope round the neck. This rope was called " Buombwe."

The goat was next sacrificed and its blood sprinkled over the grass, the while the priest called loudly on Mumbo to save the dying man or to restore to life the corpse—as the case might be, generally with but indifferent success.

795 The Second Degree consisted of all the dependants, male and female, of those especially " Called " by Mumbo himself, and also any other people who, although not specifically " Called," chose to join the cult.

795 At sunrise and at sunset all Mumboites stand facing the sun with 788 the first finger and thumb of each hand meeting to form a circle and held up to the eyes like binoculars. Having gazed at the sun intensely until they are completely dazzled, they stretch out their arms towards 782 it and break into rapid and often unintelligible prayer. This is interesting in that the ancient Luo religion was—and in places still is—that of sun worship. Occasionally when they feel like it they also pray thus to the Lake, and even, it is said, sacrifice cattle, throwing the meat into the Lake to the crocodiles.

795 As was to be expected from a retrogressive religion which not only 782 encouraged but ordained idleness and uncleanliness, it was not long before its adherents, having nothing to do or to think about, began to indulge in unpleasant practices which the normal Jaluo, however 839 uncivilised he might be, held in abhorrence. The communal enjoyment of women, including incest, bhang smoking, sodomy, and even bestiality, all made their appearance, though these practices seem to

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have been more common in South Kavirondo whither the cult had spread and had been received with enthusiasm.

The priests started " schools " which they usually placed on hill-tops, and in the best proselytising traditions, attracted potential adherents by giving feasts of their slaughtered cattle. They also built here and there what might be called groves or places for the worship of Mumbo where sacrifices were made to the accompaniment of many obscenities and dancing.

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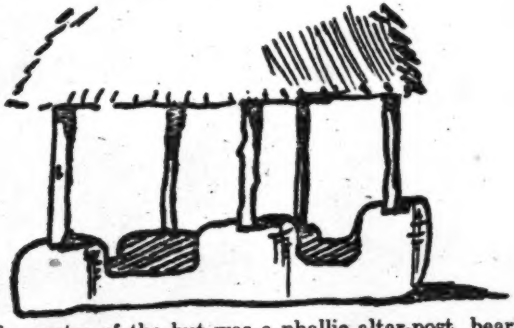
In some of these Groves were wooden idols, one of which has been presented to the Natural History Museum by Mr. C. M. Dobbs, late Provincial Commissioner for Nyanza Province. This practice of constructing sacred Groves to Mumbo and erecting idols is interesting since all the people who were questioned about this cult said definitely that such things had never been commanded by Mumbo himself. True, he had said that there were to be sacrifices made to him with dancing to the accompaniment of drums and bull-roarers (without musical accompaniment), but he meant them to take place in each boma. No instructions had been given for groves or idols.

An extract from the report of the District Officer who found the idol is worth inserting at this point:—

" . . . .The meeting place of the cult consisted of a beautifully swept enclosure adjoining the High Priest's Boma and capable of seating some two hundred people. From the next boma to that of the High Priest ran a made path, four feet wide and trenched at the sides . . . . The enclosure was surrounded by a well-built dry stone wall. In the centre was a little semi-open hut about six feet in diameter, finished with white mud . . . . There was no door, it appeared symmetrical all round, thus:—

[346]



" In the centre of the hut was a phallic altar-post, bearing traces of blood-stains . . . . The High Priest's daughter produced some unpleasant animal relics from a hole in the wall in the enclosure. In the Western corner a bush plant (Nyaluthkoth) had been planted. . . .

8: Shaw G-5 (ca. 1930)1932 FL11 Luo FL11

dowry had been paid; he was thus enabled to spread his payments of the bride-price over a longer period than would otherwise have been possible. Also the fact that the girl was with child prevented her from being carried off by any other man; apparently a not unheard of occurrence. 583

The wedding feast itself—the *kirisya*—took place in the bridegroom's *dala*. The bride arrived accompanied by her sisters, or, if her sisters were too young to go with her, by her brothers' wives. She was also attended by one older woman, perhaps a married sister, who acted as a chaperone. It was the special duty of this older woman to see that the bride was properly treated, and to make herself polite to the father and mother of the bridegroom. But with this excepion older men and women were never included in the bride's party. Any man who attached himself to it would have been laughed at for mixing himself up with an affair that concerned women only. On the other hand not only did the bridegroom's sisters attend the feast but, as well, all his brothers, half brothers, and first cousins (in other words all the people he called " brother "), the wives of his brothers, and all his male friends. 585

As a rule the wedding feast lasted only one day, but if the guests had come long distances, it might last two or even three days. The feast consisted of porridge and meat. The young people were not given beer, but the bridegroom's mother usually brewed a small quantity for her husband and his brothers.

The meat provided consisted of the flesh of a bull which was cut up and apportioned according to certain definite rules. The division was the duty of the bridegroom's father, who first of all cut a small piece from the neck and sent it into the bridegroom's mother, who waited in her hut to receive it. He then cut more small pieces from the neck and scattered them outside and inside her hut. This was an offering to the ancestral spirits, and was accompanied by the following prayer:— 585 782

Dho waniego dhiang mar dhakonye juogi duto ubi ucham bad jachien aketo nū tieloka kwara gi woura gidega umi ringere nyani okwe natu kiringia marach obed man gima maber dalo duto.

Prayer and offering were together intended to placate the ancestral spirits and to persuade them to bless the marriage. After this the right fore leg was cut off and placed in the centre of the mother's hut. This fore-leg had a special name, *badjachien* and was a gift to all the ancestral spirits. It was afterwards eaten by the bridegroom's father and mother, and part of it was dried and sent to the bride's mother.

The whole of the breast, with the exception of a small piece reserved for the bridegroom's brothers, is sent to the brothers of the 585 184

9: Owen M-5 (ca. 1920)1933 FL11 Luo FL11

FOOD PRODUCTION AND KINDRED MATTERS, AMONGST THE LUO.

By Archdeacon W. E. Owen.

(Paper read at the 3rd Annual Scientific Meeting held in Nov., 1933.)

Soil:

134 The production of food must necessarily be associated with knowledge of the soil. The principal soil varieties have been named by the Luo, and the methods appropriate to each variety are well known. Black cotton soil, called " anywang," occurs over a wide area, mainly around the lake shores, and is conspicuous in the locations of Uyoma, Karachwonya, Kasigunga and the Kano Plains. Red earth, called " Iwala," is, speaking generally, found further back from the lake, on the higher lands, and is to be found over wide tracts in Central and South Kavirondo, a notable location being North Gem, in Central Kavirondo. Sandy soil, called " kwoyo," is generally found in the neighbourhood of outcrops of granite, which is a prominent feature in many parts. The locations of Asembo in Central Kavirondo, and Suna in South Kavirondo are good examples of areas where this sandy soil is abundant. Murram, called " gu " when solid and " ge " when disintegrated into a soil, occurs in places all over the country, Sakwa and Alego in particular providing many examples of it. Stony soil, called " kite," is to be found over large stretches, particularly in those neighbourhoods where escarpments rise from the regions round the lake. Though the labour involved in the cultivation of this stony soil is very great, where there is pressure of population, every available patch is made to produce food.

Rainfall:

132 Over certain sections of the country rainfall is very uncertain. The worst locations in this respect are lower Seme, Uyoma, Sakwa, Kadimo, parts of Asembo, Mirunda, Kasigunga and Rusinga. In other districts rainfall is abundant, running from forty to sixty five inches in the year, well distributed over the months, with the exception of January and early February. January is reckoned to be the driest [526] month of the year, and is the month when there is most relaxation from agricultural operations, this being the favourite time for the inter-clan wrestling matches.

789 Contrary to what many would expect, amongst people who
●782 periodically suffer from lack of rain, the Luo have developed no system
776 of rain makers. At the top of Usenge Hill in Kadimo, there is still to be seen a site marked by a collection of votive pots, where the local

789 elders gathered to offer sacrifice and supplicate the local spirit,
● 782 together with the clan spirits, in times of great drought, but this is
776 entirely different from the rain-making cult. Even in this instance, it is doubtful whether the ceremony has not been influenced in large measure by the neighbouring Bantu peoples. The particular guardian spirit of this hill, is reputed to be a fabulously big snake, so enormous as to be able to encircle the hill with its body. Away from the Lake shore, which suffers most from uncertain rainfall, the Luo account very easily for the fact that they have no rain-makers. They simply say that they never have lack of rain, so why should they have rain-makers.

791 But though they have no rain-makers, they have a term for rain-maker, whom they call "Jajimb koth." When they need a rain-maker they employ either a Bantu from the Basiekwe clan of the Banyole, or one from Mudhiero, Yiro in Marama. And, of course, it is not alone for agriculture that rain is needed. The fishing in the rivers suffers greatly when the rivers run low, and fishermen not infrequently call in the aid of the rain-maker. On the lower reaches [782] of the Nzoia River, there existed a custom now happily extinct, according to which human sacrifice was made to the spirit of the river. The unfortunate person to be sacrificed was a girl, generally a young one and ill-favoured, who was bound, and some accounts say stunned, before being cast into the river. Rain-makers still flourish, though shorn of much of their influence and tribute. Only a few years ago I was in Uyoma during a time of rain shortage. I happened to be collecting genealogies, and was visiting the old men for this purpose. The conversation turned on the lack of rain, and I asked had they sent for the rain-maker. I really did not expect that they would have done so, and was somewhat surprised to find that they had sent their offerings to one of the Bantu of the Basiekwe clan. It seemed a pity that they should waste their substance on what could do them no earthly good, so I spent some time trying to convince them that the [609] rain-maker had no power to bring rain. They listened very politely, but at the end of it were "of the same opinion still." I left them gently poking fun at them for being so credulous. I was about a mile or less from my camp, and during my walk home, suddenly, from nowhere, clouds rushed up, a violent rain storm pelted down and I got thoroughly drenched. I would have given a good deal to have been able to listen to the comments of those who had heard so politely my well-meant arguments. Incidents somewhat like this are, no doubt, responsible for the deep seated faith in the rain-makers' powers. It did not convince me.

241 The preparation of the soil for the seed was, and is, performed
791 without any ceremony of invocation preceding it, except when the land had been taken in conquest from enemies. In the latter case the

241 indicate that sowing time is at hand. In the autumn, there is the
826 ordinary African kite, which comes over literally, at times, in thousands, feeding in the air, and on the ground on the swarms of flying ants. Some withhold their sowing until these birds appear.

241 In exceptional cases an important sacrifice, called " bilo " was performed before sowing took place. If the " Jaduong' bilo " was
782 warned in a dream of impending disaster to the coming season's food supply, he called the elders of the community together for the purpose of the ceremony. " Bilo " was performed to avert any disaster threatening the community. It was always performed in the early morning, before the cattle had gone out to graze. The present " Jabilo " in Sakwa location performed the ceremony of " bilo " in 1931 when the people of Sakwa had a boundary dispute with their neighbours of Asembo. He performed it again in the early months of 1933 to get rid of the locusts. It is natural that not a few in Sakwa attribute the absence of locusts this year to the effect of this ceremony.

241 When the time was ripe for sowing, the " Mikayi " or chief wife
177 of the head of the community, was always the first to sow. None dare begin their sowing until the " mikayi " had thus given permission.
[626] Any who were so bold as to begin before the " mikayi " were made to feel the displeasure of the community. As recently as 1931 I have known a man to come under discipline for sowing too soon. But what with the efforts of the Agricultural Department, pressing upon the people the wisdom of early sowing, together with a widespread knowledge of the names of the months, re-inforced by the rise of individualism accompanied by the breakdown of tribal authority, the influence of the " mikayi " is steadily waning. Amongst the more advanced sections of the communities it has ceased to exist, and they are no longer subject to discipline for early sowing. After sowing comes a pause, but not for long. About April weeding begins. This is shared in by all. Amongst the sturdier crops, it is done by the hoe, but in crops like the small millet, called " kal," the seed is sown too closely for there to be room for a hoe, so it has to be done by hand, the weeders squatting down on their heels and pulling up the weeds. This results in a much trampled crop, but it very soon recovers, and suffers no damage. In recent years the Administration has made great efforts to get people to eradicate the striga weed, called by the Luo " hayongo." This weed shoots up, curiously enough, after the customary weeding has been done. The Luo let it grow in spite of the fact that they know that land infested with it must be left for a term of years. I have over and over again tried to persuade them of the wisdom and benefit of getting rid of it, but to no avail. Anything which comes after the routine weeding has been done is allowed to remain.

10: Roscoe M-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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butter being used for cooking a special meal which is eaten by the owner of the cow and his wife; a little of the butter is set aside and they smear it on their lips, but none of it may be smeared on their bodies. After the meal has been eaten, the cow is milked regularly and the milk may now be drunk by all the family.

Oxen used for riding. Oxen are frequently used for riding. The young men train the animals to this and ride them constantly. They turn them as they wish by prodding the side of the animal's cheek with a stick from which it turns away. The animals are trained, however, to obey the voice rather than wait for the stick. They trot along at a fast rate and cover the ground quicker than a man can walk.

Sheep and goats. Sheep and goats are kept by all villagers. Goats especially are eaten by men and women without any restrictions. Fowls are also kept, though, as is usual among most African tribes, fowls have to find their own food, and their chickens are constantly preyed upon by hawks and kites, and those that grow up are of a poor and miserable kind.

Building.

Architecture and mode of building. The houses are round huts with conical thatched roofs They have an outer wall of stakes three and sometimes four feet high with mud smeared over them on the inside and a central pole passing through the roof, to which the rafters are attached. The roof is thatched with grass and the end of the central pole, which passes through the roof, is rudely carved. The houses are grouped together, leaving room enough to pass between them, and a growing fence surrounds them. Many villages have no outer fence, but are built high up the hill-sides for protection from hostile clans.

Religion.

Religious beliefs. Apart from worship of the dead and a belief in ghosts, the people have little religion. They call the supreme being Nyasi, who, they say, is to be found in large trees. In times of trouble or sickness they make offerings to him of an animal which is killed under a large tree, and the

10: Roscoe M-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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782 flesh is cooked and eaten near by, though sometimes the meat is taken a little distance away and is not eaten under the shadow of the tree.

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791 **Rain-making.** Rain-making is an important ceremony, but it is performed by a Musoga priest who lives among the people for the purpose of assisting them in discharging those religious obligations which they consider necessary yet do not themselves understand how to perform. The man is treated with great respect and has a comfortable existence among them.

Relationships.

601 **Terms of relationship.** The following terms of relationship were supplied by the Rev. J. J. Willis, now Bishop of Uganda, formerly a C.M.S. Missionary at Maseno, Kavirondo, who says that the pronominal forms for Father and Mother are used, that is, each person says "My father" or "My mother" (m.s. = man speaks, w.s. = woman speaks).

Father, won, wora
Mother, min, mama
Eldest brother (m.s.), kayo, ng'amodwong'ena
Eldest sister (w.s.), nyamin madwong', nyamera madwong'
Sister (m.s.), Nyamin, Nyamera.
Father's brother, omin won, omin worwa
Father's brother's wife, min, minwa mama
Father's brother's child, owat, owadwa
Father's sister, wa, waya
Father's sister's husband, chwor wa, chwor waya
Father's sister's child (boy), wod wa, wod waya
Father's sister's child (girl), nyar wa, nyar waya
Mother's brother, ner, nera
Mother's brother's wife, chi ner, chi nera
Mother's brother's child (boy), woda ner, woda nera
Mother's brother's child (girl), min, mama
Mother's sister, min, mama
Mother's sister's husband, won, wonwa
Mother's sister's child (boy), owat mar nyina hao, owadwa mar nyina hao

11: Hartmann M-5 (ca. 1920)1928 FL11 Luo FL11

768 sick in the village and he witchdoctor says that the sickness is due to neglect of deceased's grave, and that they have to sacrifice a goat or a bull to propitiate him, 769 then they put some sticks round the grave again by way of a hut, in the doorway 753 of which they roast a chicken, and some blood of the sacrifice is put in a potsherd and placed on the grave.

On the anniversary of the death or thereabouts beer is brewn again. First 769 however deceased's son visits the witchdoctor, who tels him to sacrifice a special ●782 cock, e. g. a big black one, or one with an extra toe, or one with very short legs, ect. Until such a cock is found, as indicated by the witchdoctor, the beer will be of 273 no use. Then the chicken is roasted and eaten, except for one leg which is put on the grave and covered with a basket. Now the *wimbi* for the beer is coarsely ground and put in pots for fermenting. After twelve days the fermented *wimbi* is roasted and the next morning dried. Unground *wimbi* is soaked in water, which is strained off again, and the grain remains for 3 days in covered pots in order to sprout, after which it is dried. When these ingredients are ready, then the next day another visit is paid to the witchdoctor, who again orders a special chicken to be sacrificed, this time e. g. a white one, which is killed and eaten in the morning. Now the [824 wives and children of deceased only pick some seed-pods of a certain wild plant 301] (*ochok*) which they string like beads on the stalk of creeping grass *(modhono)*. These strings they put round their necks, and also round the necks of the water-vessels with which they go to the well to fetch water for the further preparations of the beer. The water is put out in the sun, and when it has become luke-warm, it is poured on the fermented *wimbi* in big earthen pots. Next day the sprouted *wimbi* is ground and put in the beerpots too. The following morning early the relations put some of the beer, now ready, in a small vessel, which they put on the grave of deceased, with a reed in it, after which the people of the village take some of the beer and drink it. Presently they bring a cock which they suspend by its legs alive in the gateway of the kraal together with some secret medecine, and it remains hanging there till sunset. From 8 o'clock in the morning onwards all the relations, friends and neighbours come to partake of the beer, which is put in an enormus earthen pot *(mbiru)* in an open space outside, each visitor bringing his own reed for sucking the beer. Nobody can enter the kraal that day except by the gateway where the chicken is hanging, all the other entrances being closed up. And the chicken is hung in such a way that anyone entering has to touch it. Suppose a [754] person with an "evil eye" would enter for the purpose of bewitching somebody there, the medicine would start working on him; and he would leave the place with sore eyes, which would cause him much suffering. If this person, however, returns to the village, and owns up that he came there to bewitch somebody, he will be asked to spit on the ground, so that the person bewitched may not die; and doing so his eyes will heal again.

Beer is supplied to anybody entering the kraal for three days at a stretch. No food is cooked these days; if some food is brought from a neighbouring village they may take it but otherwise they live on beer only. All the children of round about, born about the time of persons death and called after him are carried by their mothers to this beer party. Each mother brings a cooked chicken and some

11: Hartmann M-5 (ca. 1920) 1928 FL11 Luo FL11

food for the child, but they themselves only drink beer. On the last day all the iron, brass and other ornaments which deceased used to wear are sprinkled with some beer, made of kaffir-corn, which has previously been sacrificed. Then the ornaments are devided amongst the relations, who will wear them in future. After this all go home.

Next morning a sheep is killed and eaten. The wet skin is called the garment of deceased, and as such is worn for that day by his eldest son. At night it is slung over the gateway, where in time it rots away or some hyena finds it and makes off with it.

Every person, whether man, woman or child, is buried absolutely naked, and without any ornaments; even the little brass rings with a big blue bead each, which the old men wear all along the edge of both ears are taken out immediately after his death. To this rule there is one exception only. A *jabilo*, who is not an ordinary medicine-man, but one who has secret medicine, which he does not use for evil purposes except in warfare, is considered the greatest among men. For this reason he is specially honoured at his death. A big bull is killed and offered as a sacrifice, and the *jabilo* is buried in the fresh skin of the animal.

Burial of a Woman.

From the moment of a woman's death wailing goes on till next morning about 10 o'clock, when either her husband or her son dig the grave. All her ornaments are taken off, like at the occasion of a man's death.

Every woman is buried inside her own hut; because a woman is called the owner of the hut *(wonjot)*; hence at her death the hut has served its purpose.

When the grave is ready deceased's husband, assisted by two other people put her down in it, lying on her left side (men on their right). Her children fill up the grave scraping the earth with hands and feet, heir backs towards the corpse. The wailing goes on for another half hour whilst the crowds gather.

Then all the women and girls prepare themselves for a kind of wardance to take place near the village. They take off their tassels which they throw on the roof deceased's hut. They smear themselves with mud, and dress themselves up in the war-dress of the men who came to the funeral (shields and spears left at home).

Whilst the girls and women are dancing to the beating of drums, the men and boys squat down in the village and smoke hemp. After about an hour they come back from the dance, return their apparel to the men and go home. But the men remain till the afternoon, and those living near by call again at night for a chat.

After 3 days the women of the neighbourhood gather again in order to cook and eat the dried meat, fish and other food which the deceased left in the hut at her death. After the meal they go to sweep the grave (on the 3rd day, not the 4th as after the burial of a man) gathering some earth of it in an old basket, which is put on the path outside the kraal together with her socalled pillow *(orindo)*. They also give away deceased's hoe to an old woman, and throw away its handle.

On the same day the husband of deceased and one old woman go round to the huts of the near relations, sprinkling in each hut some medicine, throwing in each hut the seedball of an ochokplant, and gathering from its inhabitants a small

14: Johnston G-4, 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11

this tail behind and receives a present from her husband. Afterwards it is considered very bad manners for a married woman to serve food to her husband without putting on this tail. On the other hand, if the husband or any other man should touch the married woman's tail, it is considered that he wishes to bewitch her, and such an offence must be atoned for by the usual sacrifice of a goat.

430. PATTERN FREQUENTLY SHAVED ON MEN'S HEADS (JA-LUO)

The Ja-luo *pull out the incisors* in the lower jaw. It may also occur amongst these people, as amongst the Lango tribes to the north, that not only the four incisors, but even the canines, are taken out, at any rate from the mouths of boys. They *do not circumcise*, nor do they *scar or tattoo* their bodies, with the exception that women raise three parallel lines of dots in a semi-circle on either side of the body, the ends of the semi-circle meeting in front just below the navel, and again on the backbone. If a man has killed an enemy in war, he propitiates his enemy's spirit by shaving his head for three days after his return. Heads of men are also shaved in the pattern given in the accompanying illustration (Fig. 430).

The Ja-luo, together with tribes remotely allied in origin, such as the Sūk and Lango, *ornament the outer rim of the ear* in a remarkable manner. About fifteen small holes are pierced along the edge of the cartilage, and a flattened ring of brass (looking in shape rather like a melon seed) is inserted. Hanging on the outer side of the brass ring is a large blue glass bead. In the lowest hole towards the lobe a plain brass ring is inserted. Regarding these blue beads Mr. Hobley writes: "For a long time I thought these blue beads were ordinary trade beads of the variety known as 'kiketi'; but upon inquiry I found this idea was indignantly repudiated. It was explained to me that the beads were picked up in the fields in the neighbourhood of the Maragolia Hills* after a heavy thunderstorm, and it was believed that they descended with the rain." Some of the chiefs also wear bits of jasper and chalcedony with a fine circular hole. These beads were formerly of great value, and were purchased at the rate of one cow per bead. They are said to have been picked up in the same way. Their name for these beads is

* In North Kavirondo.

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765 a dead person shave their heads for three days after the death. The eldest son of the deceased sits on a stool outside the village, and has his head shaved. If any one of importance dies, the neighbours do not
766 cultivate for three days after the death. If a big chief dies, all the surrounding people collect at the village, and in such cases even hostilities between clans are suspended, and all join in the funeral rites of the late chief, even if he happens to be at war with some of his dependent clans. In the case of the death of a chief, a new hut is built. The grave of the chief is dug by his brother. A new ox hide is placed at the bottom of the grave, and the head of the corpse is covered with a water-pot. Seeds of every kind of grain grown in the vicinity are put into the grave, but sweet potatoes are excluded. The people dance and drink "tembo" for ten days, and slaughter many oxen. The men wail for ten days, but the women wail every morning for a year. No one cultivates the fields for ten days.

428 When a man dies, his *property* goes to the brother, if the children are small. If the eldest son is grown up, he takes the property and gives his brothers a share, but a man is not allowed to take the amount paid by any one who marries one of his sisters. This marriage payment goes to
[587] the deceased father's brothers. The brothers of the deceased take his wives,
[622] but the eldest son probably takes the youngest wife of his deceased father. When a chief dies, the son whom he has chosen succeeds him. This successor is chosen really some years before the chief dies. The successor divides the private property of the chief with his brothers.

727 When a warrior *has killed a man in warfare*, he must (besides
●782 shaving his head) catch a fowl and hang it round his neck head uppermost. He must not enter his home village until this has been done. Whilst the fowl is suspended to the man's neck by the beak its head is severed from the body, and the head is left hanging from the man's neck. The warrior then enters the village, and shortly afterwards prepares a big feast to propitiate the man he has killed, so that his ghost may not give
788 trouble. If a house is struck by *lightning*, and any one is killed inside, the head-man of the village must obtain a male fowl of a red colour and walk round the house holding up the fowl three times. The house is then broken up, and the wood is used for other purposes. When desiring
728 *to make peace* with another tribe with whom they have been at war, they kill a sheep and put part of it into a wooden mortar such as is used for crushing grain. The representatives of each side then take out pieces of the flesh and exchange them reciprocally. An old man belonging to the side which has been worsted, and which is suing for peace, must
[231] then go to the head village of the conqueror and proceed to sweep up the cattle kraal. This is accepted as a kind of submission.

145 Like the Bantu Kavirondo, the Ja-luo are in the main *a healthy people.*

16: Northcote G-5 (no date) 1907 FL11 Luo FL11

together again, and singly or in twos and threes run out and go through a fight with some invisible foes, again presumably, the evil spirits. They are very serious all the while, and the rest watch in silence their champions as they charge, retreat and cower down behind the huge shields. Then comes more feasting, with the customary offering to the sun, and finally they disperse. 764

The wailing is kept up in the case of a chief for six days, and performed twice a day at sunrise and sunset, but after the day of the dance each village mourns by itself; for a common person three days is the limit.

The corpse is buried in a recumbent position in the deceased's hut, but the hut continues to be occupied, generally by the deceased man's heir; it is not at once destroyed or disused, as some authorities, among them Sir C. Eliot, maintain. Last of all, when the mourning is over, an offering of beer, grain, and chicken flesh, is put on the grave.

The Jaluo religion is extremely slight. They worship the sun, and to a less extent the moon. They regard the sun as a deity seldom beneficent, more often malignant, and usually apathetic; as one of them said to the writer, "It does not matter how much you pray, you fall sick and die just the same." The offerings made at all important occasions in their daily life they make more with the idea of appeasing him than of obtaining positive benefits. 776 781 782

Witchcraft, however, and demonology occupy their minds far more. The wizard is greatly dreaded, and it is easy for an unscrupulous Kavirondo to obtain his neighbour's property by accusing him of having killed one of his relations by witchcraft, knowing that he will have his neighbours' support and sympathy. The wizard is sought both for good and evil purposes; his aid is invoked alike to detect criminals and to do harm to an adversary. In a recent case brought before the writer a man was accused of having murdered one of his wives by witchcraft. According to his accusers, the supposed murderer missed his razor and accused two of his wives of the theft. They both denied all knowledge of the missing article, and he gave them till the evening of that day to find it. When their term of grace came to an end, and the razor was not produced, he was alleged to have struck one of his wives, who was on the point of bearing a child. He then produced two charms which he affixed to their respective huts, threatening that the thief would be detected by the charm and would die. Next day the woman who was said to have been struck died after producing a still-born child. The curious result was that the man was tried for murder, the accusers believing that the crime had been committed by witchcraft, and the magistrate holding that, if the man caused his wife's death at all, it was by the blow which he was alleged to have given her. The blow turned out to be a myth, and the man was discharged, much to his accusers' disgust. 754 754 674

When a Kavirondo wishes to kill his enemy secretly, the usual method is to bury a dead rat or chicken at his victim's door. If, when the latter comes out the next morning, he treads on the spot where the animal is buried, it is believed that he will die that day. 754

17: Southall E-5 (1946-1947) 1952 FL11 Luo FL11

less as titular owner of the whole herd. The scheme of division may be represented as in the diagram below. All other livestock is divided in the same way. The eldest son of the first wife must marry before any other sons can do so, and if the first wife has no sons the rest must wait till there is no further chance of her bearing any. When the first wife dies, the second wife becomes chief wife of the homestead, but a first wife's full status can only be succeeded to when she is replaced by a sister and a new homestead is built. The property of a barren wife is inherited by a stepson who is adopted into her household to do the man's work in it.

CATTLE HERD

All herded together

Head of homestead titular owner of all

1. *Cattle of the* abila

Strict property of homestead head.

Used to help sons or brothers' sons to marry, or to marry new wives for homestead head.

Residue ultimately inherited by the youngest son of the homestead, who also takes the father's share of cattle from any subsequent marriages of sisters.

All derived from the heifer and bull taken by the father at every daughter's marriage, and from their increase.

Milk from these used by the homestead head.

Cattle of the wives' houses

Most to *mikayi*, next to *nyachira*, rest among *rero* wives.

2. Cattle strictly property of the wives.

Ultimately inherited by youngest son of each house.

All derived from the heifer called *roch kode* received by the mother at each daughter's marriage, and from the heifer of *atake* and bull settled upon a wife by her father at the end of her marriage ceremonies.

3. Cattle held for sons' marriages.

Any residue inherited by youngest son of each house.

All derived from the cattle received at daughters' marriages other than those specified under 1 and 2.

Milk from these used by the wives.

Homestead head has over all discretion in the original division of accruing cattle, and can persuade wives to give up cattle from category 3 to help stepsons to marry, and may by agreement take an extra heifer from those received at a daughter's marriage, to complete the bridewealth of one of his other wives.

Succession to authority in the family, and also in the lineage, depends on a combination of three qualifications: primogeniture, personal suitability in character and wealth, and appointment by one's predecessor. Primogeniture is highly regarded and preferred, but is never an absolute rule. Whenever an eldest son is unsuitable, or another agnatic relative is clearly more suitable, the latter is chosen to succeed. But a successor must be named by his predecessor, and as a result of the strong common sentiments in family and lineage segment, the predecessor's appointee seems usually to have been the one whom the elders of the group wish to elect when they meet at the funeral of the predecessor to confirm his choice.

Ancestor worship is falling into abeyance among the Luo of today. All those who go to school become at least nominal Christians, and this affects most of the young, while the old are becoming diffident in the performance of rites which no longer command universal respect. The spirit shrines which used to be placed between the first and second wives' huts are hardly seen today, nor the three stones which used to stand before the spirit shrine, with the stone of sacrifice buried beneath (see

17: Southall E-5 (1946-1947) 1952 FL11 Luo FL11

diagram, p. 17). It is therefore difficult to give a precise account of the relation between ancestor worship and lineage formation. It is noteworthy, however, that the ritual formula at a sacrifice was not spoken by any particular descendant of the recipient of sacrifice, but by any elders of his lineage present, who repeated it in turn while waiting for the sacrificial bull to urinate or excrete. If it refused to do this it was rejected and another substituted, and it was the elder who was repeating the formula at the moment when the bull urinated or excreted who had to make the sacrifice. The usual formula was *wuoṛwa, luong' wuoṛu uchiemo*—'our father, call your father and eat'—followed by the bidding of a blessing on the particular matter in hand. In the funeral ritual more emphasis seems to be laid on insulating the living from the ill will of the dead than on securing the status of the latter in the other world. Similarly at any sacrifice, ancestors called to share are bidden to give the blessings for which they are asked on pain of being jeered at and despised. Children may be named, according to the father's judgement, after various circumstances or persons linked with the child's birth or ascertained in dreams. But if the child cries unusually the diviner (*ajuoga*) is called to discover which ancestor is seeking to have the child named after it. In this way the child may be named after its own father or mother, or any other relative, male or female. The same group of names tends to occur frequently in converging lines of ascent, especially those of famous ancestors, which are repeated particularly often, but there is no regular belief in the necessary reincarnation of ancestors in alternate generations.

IV. LINEAGE CONCEPTS

THE special terms which the Luo use for lineages show the distinctions which they make between different aspects of the activity of these groups. Frequently all these terms may be applied to the same group on different occasions depending on the context. The most important of these terms are *dhoot*, *gweng'*, *libamba*, and *anyuola*. *Gweng'* and *dhoot* are used of class A segments only, *anyuola* of class B segments only, and *libamba* may be used of either. The use of these terms is always logical when interpreted in relation to the structural position of the speaker, but their etymology does not always seem consistent with this unless it is understood in a symbolic sense. It may be best to give a general account of the usage and etymology of each one, followed by some quotations from informants.

Dhoot (pl. *dhoudi*) is used for all those lineages which are corporate landholding units. They are the lineages already referred to as class A. Some idea of the variations in their size and population is given in the population figures included in Figs. 1 and 2, and the maps (Figs. 3, 4, and 5). They carry general social functions. Each manages its political, jural, economic, ritual, and other affairs through a council of elders representing its major segments and recognizing one of their number as leader. Organized on a territorial basis, they are the units of primary settlement or multiples of them,[1] responsible for the acquisition, apportionment, and use of land. They are the basis of a whole series of corporate group activities ranging from

[1] By settlement I mean simply a defined area of territory, containing the dwellings and all the land resources of a specified social group. The Luo have no villages in the sense of recognized aggregations of dwellings larger than those of the family.

[text continues on p. 27]

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may be of Bantu origin. The facility with which the Luo incorporate linguistic borrowings even in the case of fundamental concepts (e.g. *Nyasaye*, God; *wasigu*, enemies, &c.) is in marked contrast to the persistence with which they have retained the other elements of their culture and imposed them on the non-Luo groups assimilated by them. The Luo sum up in the term *libamba* all those forces of friction and competition which weaken the solidarity of a lineage segment and lead to its further subdivision. The quarrels of uterine brothers and the jealousies of co-wives are regarded as typical of these. A *libamba* is, then, a rival lineage segment co-ordinate to one's own. When a man speaks of his *libamba* he always means a segment other than his own, but included in the same superordinate segment as is the one he has in mind as claiming his loyalty at that particular moment. It is those groups of *dhoudi* which stand in the *libamba* relationship to one another which play together at *adhula*, wrestle together, and fight together with clubs.[1]

The lineages of class B remain passive except when called into action in connexion with certain ritual situations, and the chance of this occurring depends mainly on their genealogical position. Those which are below the level of the minimal *dhoot* and *gweng'*, down to and including the members of compound and elementary families, are constantly being involved as groups in the many rituals which accompany marriages and funerals, the founding of new homesteads, the starting of cultivation, sowing and reaping, and the organization of other periodic affairs within the minimal *gweng'*. The class B segments above this level only come into action haphazardly according to the incidence of ancestral sacrifices. When any social group is faced with a misfortune for which no specific remedy is recognized, a diviner (*ajuoga*) is consulted, and sacrifice made to the patrilineal ancestor indicated as responsible for the trouble. Which one is selected depends on the gravity of the misfortune and the level of lineage grouping affected by it. The diviner is most likely to indicate one of the eponymous ancestors of *dhoudi* as they are most prominent in the minds of all. If, however, the eponymous ancestor of any other segment is indicated, it would emerge from its passivity into action. Even when it is the eponymous ancestor of a *dhoot* who receives sacrifice, some or all of its genealogical co-ordinates and subordinates may only be class B segments, and these would be called into action on such occasions since the sacrificing segment usually calls its co-ordinates to participate and is itself represented by its major segments.[2] All class B segments acting in this way, whether below or above the level of the minimal *dhoot*, are called *anyuola*. Even a segment which is itself a *dhoot* and *gweng'* may be called *anyuola* in this context. The etymology of this word[3] might well suggest a uterine principle of grouping. However, as with *dhoot*, every *anyuola* is a patrilineal descent group, and whether it takes its name from a man or a woman depends on the genealogical incidence of co-wives and uterine brothers and the circumstances which call into action the agnatic groups

[1] Cf. the Tallensi concept of *suuzot* (Fortes, *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 32, 37, 201). Here, too, there is the idea of a reciprocal relationship between co-ordinates, but to the Tallensi the chief emphasis is on the bond of unity resulting from ancestral brotherhood, whereas for the Luo it is on competitive subordination within a common superordinate. Co-ordinate segments are equally *libamba* to one another whether their eponyms were co-wives or uterine brothers.

[2] See below, p. 35. Cf. Fortes's analysis of the same principle among the Tallensi (*The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, p. 31).

[3] *nyuol* n., birth; *nyuolo* v., to give birth. But it is possible to apply this root to procreation by men.

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6. Liver and remaining ribs and offal: for all the women of the homestead.
7. Kidneys: for the woman's sisters still in their mother's house and their friends.
8. Customary portion for the eldest married daughter of the woman's mother.
9. Customary portions to be eaten, some raw, some cooked by *bulo*, by all the elders assembled for the distribution.

It is worth while to treat this one rite at length, because it is the prototype of so many others. Its especial significance is that it takes place at the lowest level of segmentary organization, that it is bound to occur in every family as often as a daughter is married off, and that it draws into a structured participation not merely lineage leaders and senior elders but every man, woman, and child in the family. When the Luo youngster of either sex begins to grasp why, on certain occasions, it receives a special supply of kidney or ribs to roast on the fire with its playmates, its education in the theory of lineage structure has begun. The same holds true for all the wives of the men who bring home their portions of meat to be cooked, and share them with favourite wives or children, or allow them the scraps.

There are many other occasions on which meat has to be ritually divided. In every case a similar procedure is followed, with the same articulation of lineage structure. There are the sacrifices previously mentioned, which are made to the ancestor indicated by the diviner as the cause of some misfortune. Sacrifice is also made usually within a year or so of the death of any elder of importance, and the level of lineage whose major segments are called to share in it depends upon the dead man's status. If he took part in the councils of the maximal lineage its major segments would certainly be called; if he was of less importance the major segments of a lineage at some lower level would be called. A further custom occasioning a demonstration of lineage segmentation is that whereby an elder of importance chooses a bull to be eaten after his death, the segments of his lineage dividing it among themselves according to principles similar to those of *riso*.

Besides sacrifices, every beer party, of whatever size and on whatever occasion, is also a display of lineage structure at one level or another. These parties are exceedingly frequent, and most frequent of all in the comparative leisure of the dry season, when there is a pause between the completed harvest and the next cultivation not yet begun. At this time few weeks will pass without a beer party somewhere in the vicinity, and often they follow on one another for days on end. In every one there is a core of elders who epitomize the structure of the lineage segments participating in the occasion. This is all quite apart from the small quantities of beer which old men like to drink with two or three neighbours independently of any ceremonial pretext. But all parties of any size have a ritual occasion, whether it be one of the innumerable occasions resulting from death which are strung out over a period of at least one and often two years, or in connexion with marriage, or for the settlement of the periodic and seasonal affairs of a class A lineage.

In the larger beer parties the pitchers of beer are distributed among lineage segments in the same way as are the joints of meat after a sacrifice. In all of them the order of drinking is strictly determined by lineage seniority, starting with the representatives of the major segments of the superordinate lineage, in the order of seniority of their eponymous ancestors, and downwards through the subordinate levels of the line particularly concerned. The level of major segments involved is always an index

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as to which particular people should help her; this obligation merely rests on whomsoever happens to be present. The assistance of a midwife is required more for a first child than for those following. Anyone in the family may help the woman in an emergency; but the presence of the husband is not considered necessary unless the case is a difficult one. In a difficult labour several strong men may be required to hold the woman, but many women give birth to their babies without any assistance. The usual positions adopted are: lying on the back with knees bent, or sitting with the back supported by a tree. Some leaves serve for the mat. Older women often have their child without assistance, but it is an obligation upon everyone who finds a woman in need of help to assist her, even if she is unknown to them.

On some occasions a woman about to give birth is made to run, eventually being seated to deliver her baby. A light pressure is exerted on the shoulders. The instructions are given by midwives, who sometimes slap the woman across her face if she does not obey their orders.

After a child is born, cold water is poured over it to make it cry. If it does not cry, iron hoes are brought and a series of loud tinkling noises made as a form of persuasion. Among the pagans, tobacco smoke is sometimes puffed into the child's nose. When it has been made to utter its first cry, its head is shaped to the normal form, and while the nurse waits for the placenta, she cleans the baby's forehead with a soft leaf. Before the cord is cut it is tied with strips of dried banana leaves at three equal intervals for a girl and at four equal intervals for a boy, to indicate the length of the period of rest. The midwives used to chant a prayer, but this is now no longer heard. It is possible that this chant was a thanksgiving and a request for the newborn baby to fare well in life.